

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 13764 01 OF 02 301504Z

45

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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USIA-15 IO-14 ACDA-19 SAJ-01 CU-05 NIC-01 OMB-01

DRC-01 /143 W

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R 301454Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4728

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 13764

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, GW, GE

SUBJECT: SOVIET DIPLOMAT COMMENTS ON BERLIN ISSUES

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET POL COUNSELOR, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM LEAVE IN MOSCOW DISCUSSED BERLIN ISSUES WITH EMBOFF AT SOCIAL FUNCTION AUGUST 29. SOVIET REP TOOK LOW-KEY APPROACH AND APPEARED INTENT ON PLAYING DOWN RECENT DIFFICULTIES. HE ALSO COMMENTED ON AMB FALIN'S PLANS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN DISCUSSING DIFFICULTIES OVER FEDERAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY'S (FEA) ESTABLISHMENT IN WEST BERLIN, SOVIET REP WAS AT PAINS TO DESCRIBE THE ENTIRE AFFAIR AS MINOR. HE SAID THAT THE ONE TURNBACK OF AN FEA EMPLOYEE WOULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED IF THE MAN HAD NOT SAID HE WORKED FOR THE FEA. THE GDR MEASURES HAD BEEN DESIGNED AS A WARNING TO THE FRG ON FEDERAL PRESENCE. EMBOFF SAID THAT, WHATEVER THE MOTIVES, THE SOVIET/GDR ACTIONS HAD

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 13764 01 OF 02 301504Z

REPRESENTED A VIOLATION OF THE QA. SOVIET REP SAID

THE FIRST VIOLATION CAME WITH THE FEA'S ESTABLISHMENT. WHEN EMBOFF BEGAN TO FOLLOW UP THIS ARGUMENT, SOVIET PLEADED THAT THERE BE NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER, STRESSING THAT THE PROBLEM WAS OVER AND SHOULD CAUSE NO FURTHER DIFFICULTIES.

3. EMBOFF ASKED SOVIET WHETHER USSR CONSIDERED DEVELOPMENT OF FRG-WEST BERLIN CULTURAL TIES AS FALLING WITHIN MEANING OF QA. SOVIET REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY AND CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CULTURAL FOUNDATION IN WEST BERLIN. SOVIET REP SAID HE SAW NO DIFFICULTY WITH THIS IN PRINCIPLE BUT WOULD HAVE TO STUDY MATTER. SUBSEQUENTLY (AFTER TALKING TO GDR PERMANENT MISSION OFFICIAL AT THE SOCIAL FUNCTION), SOVIET REP RETURNED TO DISCUSSION AND SAID THE FOUNDATION WOULD CAUSE MAJOR POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR USSR AND ITS ALLIES SINCE IT WOULD PURPORT TO REPRESENT THE CULTURE OF ALL GERMANY, INCLUDING THE GDR AND THOSE PARTS NOW BELONGING TO OTHER EE STATES. HE DID NOT BELIEVE, IF THIS WAS IN FACT THE CASE, THAT THE FOUNDATION WOULD BE A WELCOME DEVELOPMENT OF TIES.

4. EMBOFF ASKED WHY THE USSR CONTINUED TO SEND SO MANY NOTES AND STATEMENTS TO THE ALLIES PROTESTING THE EXTENSION OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES TO WEST BERLIN. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THIS SEEMED FAIRLY POINTLESS EXERCISE AND ONLY SERVED TO KEEP BERLIN AS POINT OF CONTENTION BETWEEN USSR AND ALLIES. SOVIET REP SAID PRESSURE FOR THESE NOTES CAME MAINLY FROM GDR AND SOVIET EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN. SOVIET FONOFF LEGAL SECTION WAS ALSO ACTIVE IN KEEPING CAREFUL EYE ON BERLIN DEVELOPMENTS. SOVIET REP SAID THIS WAS A ROUTINE APPROACH AND NEED NOT BE TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 BONN 13764 02 OF 02 301504Z

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5. SOVIET POL COUNSELOR DESCRIBED THE FEELING OF DISAPPOINTMENT IN MOSCOW OVER FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON'S RESIGNATION. HE SAID A CERTAIN SHOCK EFFECT HAD BEEN FELT BY THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP. ONE RESULT, HE THOUGHT, WAS THAT BREZHNEV, HAVING SEEN NIXON, BRANDT AND POMPIDOU ALL DISAPPEAR FROM POWER IN SUCH A SHORT TIME WOULD BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT PERSONAL RELATIONS DIPLOMACY IN THE FUTURE. FOR THAT REASON, POL COUNS SAID THE SOVIETS WERE TAKING A COOL APPROACH TOWARD SCHMIDT AND WOULD NOT GO OUT OF THEIR WAY TO TRY TO ESTABLISH CLOSE TIES WITH HIM. (COMMENT: THERE MAY BE AN ELEMENT OF SOUR GRAPES IN THIS STATEMENT, FOR SCHMIDT HAS SHOWN LITTLE SIGN OF WANTING TO HAVE CLOSE LINKS WITH THE SOVIETS. END COMMENT)

6. SOVIET REP SAID AMBASSADOR FALIN WOULD BE RETURNING TO BONN FROM HIS EXTENDED LEAVE IN TIME FOR GROMYKO'S SEPT 15-16 VISIT. HE SAID FALIN, WITH WHOM HE HAD

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 13764 02 OF 02 301504Z

SPOKEN IN MOSCOW, HAD BEEN CONVINCED BY FRIENDS THERE TO RETURN TO BONN FOR A YEAR OR TWO AND NOT TO LEAVE AS HE (FALIN) WISHED. SOVIET REP SAID AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR IN FALIN'S DECISION WAS NO DEPUTY FONMIN POST OPENING UP SOON AND SO THERE SEEMED LITTLE POINT IN HIS GOING BACK TO MOSCOW AT THIS TIME.

COMMENT: SOVIET REP WAS OBVIOUSLY INTENT ON PLAYING DOWN RECENT BERLIN DIFFICULTIES AND ON ASSURING US THAT THEY WERE NOW A THING OF THE PAST. THIS APPROACH MAY BE DUE TO A DESIRE TO AVOID A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE IN FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS ON THE EVE OF THE GROMYKO VISIT AND PERHAPS ALSO IN US-USSR RELATIONS IN THE WAKE OF

PRESIDENT FORD'S ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE.

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